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SUBJECT An Interview With Representative Otis Pike

HUGHES RUDD: The House Committee on Intelligence, as we mentioned earlier, is having a big public argument with the White House over some private papers; namely, some classified intelligence materials which the President does not want the Congress to have, except with some strings attached.

The chairman of the House committee is Democratic Representative Otis Pike of New York, and he's in Washington now with Fred Graham and Bruce Morton. Gentlemen?

BRUCE MORTON: Mr. Pike, this [unintelligible] with the White House started when you said that the Congress unilaterally had the right to declassify material. In fact, if the CIA comes to you and says, "Listen, if you declassify this particular sentence, you're going to blow a valuable method we have of getting information," don't you have to take their word for it? How can you know, how can you have the expertise?

REP. OTIS PIKE: Well, just for openers, I've spent 14 years on the Armed Services Committee, so I'm not a beginner at the business of classification. To a large extent, we can make some judgments of our own. To a greater extent, we do take their word. We have accepted their word. But when their arguments just are patently specious, then, of course, we do not feel obliged to accept their word.

FRED GRAHAM: Well, why do they -- why do they give you arguments that are patently specious? Is it self...

REP. PIKE: I really don't know. I think that almost always, if you really pin them down, they admit that there's no real reason to classify these documents. But there seems to be

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